CITY OF
GRAND RAPIDS
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REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

AGENDA DATE: November 9, 2026

AGENDA ITEM: Consider adopting a resolution authorizing staff to make application to and accept funds from the Minnesota Department of IRRR Commercial Redevelopment Grant Program.

PREPARED BY: Will Richter, Community Development Department

BACKGROUND:

The requested IRRR Commercial Redevelopment grant of $15,500 – on behalf of West Pines Motel - compliments a $285,000 exterior overhaul project, including the removal and replacement of existing siding and roofing along with other improvements to the building's appearance, energy efficiency, and functionality. For several years, this property sat vacant and in significant disrepair. Since the new owners Luke and Ashley St. Germain acquired the property in 2023, they have upgraded the signage and done significant interior updating to restore the 10 rooms. The interior restoration, which required a significant amount of sweat equity by the owners, has allowed the motel to begin operating again and is currently 100% occupied as extended stay rooms with many of them for Mesabi Metallics employees.

The project will also improve the property's energy efficiency. The owners have already upgraded five units with more efficient packaged terminal air-conditioning (PTAC) units. In this next phase, they plan to complete interior and exterior demolition to enable them to upgrade the remaining five units and the manager's living area, remove eight existing window air-conditioning units and installing seven mini-split systems, replacing nine exterior unit-entry doors with properly insulated doors, and replace windows in five units. These improvements will help modernize the property, improve comfort for guests, and reduce unnecessary energy loss.

This grant application supports the efforts of the owners of West Pines Motel to improve a blighted and underperforming property and is consistent with priorities established in the *Highway 2 Land Use and Development Study.*

REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION:

Make a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing staff to make application to and accept funds from the Minnesota Department of IRRR Commercial Redevelopment Grant Program on behalf of West Pines Motel.